Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

We claim:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method for producing a ~~viable~~ speech rendition of text comprising ~~the steps of~~:

parsing a sentence into punctuation and a plurality of words ~~and punctuation~~;

comparing at least one ~~each~~ word of the plurality of words to a list of pre-recorded words;

in the event that a word of the plurality of words is ~~dividing a word~~ not ~~found~~ on the list of pre-recorded words,

dividing the word into a plurality of diphones, ~~and~~

combining sound files corresponding to the plurality of diphones, and

playing the combined sound files; and

in the event that the word is on the list of pre-recorded words, playing a sound file corresponding to the ~~each~~ word, the sound file being independent of the sound files corresponding to the plurality of diphones.

Claim 2 (currently amended): The method of claim 1, further comprising: ~~the step of~~

adding inflection to at least one word of the plurality of words ~~sentence~~ in accordance with the punctuation of the sentence.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The method of claim 1, wherein the step of dividing the word into a plurality of diphones comprises ~~is accomplished by~~ comparing combinations of letters in the word to a database of diphones.

Claim 4 (currently amended): A method for producing a ~~viable~~ speech rendition of text comprising ~~the steps of~~:

providing a letter to phoneme rules database containing phonetic representations of a predetermined group of words, each letter of each word in the predetermined group of words

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being represented by a corresponding phoneme, the phoneme for a particular letter being underlined determined based on letters that precede and succeed the particular letter;

parsing a sentence into punctuation and a plurality of words and punctuation;

dividing each word of the plurality of words into a plurality of diphones based on combinations of letters in the letter to phoneme rules database;

combining sound files corresponding to the plurality of diphones; and

playing the combined [[a]] sound files file corresponding to the word.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The method of claim 4, further comprising: the step of

adding inflection to at least one [[the]] word of the plurality of words in accordance with the punctuation of the sentence.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The method of claim 4, wherein the step of dividing each [[the]] word of the plurality of words into a plurality of diphones comprises is accomplished by comparing combinations of letters in each [[the]] word of the plurality of words to the combinations of letters in the letter to phoneme rules [[a]] database of diphones.

Claim 7 (new): The method of claim 1, further comprising:

comparing at least one word of the plurality of words to a list of homographs;

in the event that a word of the plurality of words is on the list of homographs,

determining parts of speech for words adjacent the word,

selecting a sound file for the word based on the parts of speech of the adjacent words, and

playing the selected sound file.

Claim 8 (new): The method of claim 1, further comprising:

in the event that the word is not on the list of pre-recorded words,

determining whether the word includes at least one number, and

audibly spelling the word out in the event that the word includes at least one number.

Claim 9 (new): The method of claim 1, further comprising:

providing a letter to phoneme rules database containing phonetic representations of a predetermined group of words, each letter of each word in the predetermined group of words being represented by a corresponding phoneme, the phoneme for a particular letter being determined based on letters that precede and succeed the particular letter;

wherein the step of dividing the word into a plurality of diphones comprises dividing the word into a plurality of diphones based on combinations of letters in the letter to phoneme rules database.

Claim 10 (new): The method of claim 9, wherein at least one word of the predetermined group of words includes two or more letters that collectively have a single phonetic representation, wherein a first letter of the two or more letters is represented by a phoneme that corresponds to the single phonetic representation, and wherein remaining letters of the two or more letters are represented by blank phonemes.

Claim 11 (new): The method of claim 9, wherein the corresponding phoneme for a particular letter is determined based on three letters that precede and three letters that succeed the particular letter.

Claim 12 (new): The method of claim 9, wherein the corresponding phoneme for a particular letter is determined based on one letter that precedes and two letters that succeed the particular letter.

Claim 13 (new): The method of claim 4, wherein at least one word of the predetermined group of words includes two or more letters that collectively have a single phonetic representation, wherein a first letter of the two or more letters is represented by a phoneme that corresponds to the single phonetic representation, and wherein remaining letters of the two or more letters are represented by blank phonemes.

Claim 14 (new): The method of claim 4, wherein the corresponding phoneme for a particular letter is determined based on three letters that precede and three letters that succeed the particular letter.

Claim 15 (new): The method of claim 4, wherein the corresponding phoneme for a particular letter is determined based on one letter that precedes and two letters that succeed the particular letter.

Claim 16 (new): A method for producing a speech rendition of text comprising:

    parsing a sentence into a plurality of words;

    comparing a first word of the plurality of words to a list of homographs;

    in the event that the first word is on the list of homographs,

        determining parts of speech for words adjacent the first word,

        selecting a sound file for the first word based on the parts of speech of the adjacent words, the sound file being independent of sound files corresponding to diphones associated with the first word, and

        playing the selected sound file;

    in the event that the first word is not on the list of homographs, comparing the first word to a list of pre-recorded words;

    in the event that the first word is not on the list of pre-recorded words,

        dividing the first word into a plurality of diphones,

        combining sound files corresponding to the plurality of diphones, and

        playing the combined sound files; and

    in the event that the first word is on the list of pre-recorded words, playing a sound file corresponding to the first word, the sound file being independent of the sound files corresponding to the plurality of diphones.

Claim 17 (new): The method of claim 16, further comprising:

    in the event that the first word is not on the list of pre-recorded words,

        determining whether the first word includes at least one number, and

audibly spelling the first word out in the event that the first word includes at least one number.

Claim 18 (new): The method of claim 16, further comprising:

providing a letter to phoneme rules database containing phonetic representations of a predetermined group of words, each letter of each word in the predetermined group of words being represented by a corresponding phoneme, the phoneme for a particular letter being determined based on letters that precede and succeed the particular letter;

wherein the step of dividing the first word into a plurality of diphones comprises dividing the first word into a plurality of diphones based on combinations of letters in the letter to phoneme rules database.

Claim 19 (new): The method of claim 18, wherein at least one word of the predetermined group of words includes two or more letters that collectively have a single phonetic representation, wherein a first letter of the two or more letters is represented by a phoneme that corresponds to the single phonetic representation, and wherein remaining letters of the two or more letters are represented by blank phonemes.

Claim 20 (new): The method of claim 18, wherein the corresponding phoneme for a particular letter is determined based on three letters that precede and three letters that succeed the particular letter.